

As a resident of Westport living in a neighborhood that would be negatively affected by high-density housing, I am writing to express my strong opposition to the passage of bill HB No 5429.

I left Stamford four years ago to move to a smaller town. I rejected living in an urban area for many reasons: traffic and over crowded schools being the chief reasons. I did not purchase a home in a leafy, single-family housing neighborhood to later battle against high-density urban style housing on my block. Where will the waste go? Where will the cars go? I left Manhattan 12 years ago and never wanted to live again in an area with cars parking on the street, horns blaring and neighbors losing all sense of personal connection. Our narrow street cannot handle more traffic and still remain safe for children, joggers, walkers. These are the quality of life issues that will be sacrificed so developers can line their pockets and the pockets of the politicians standing up behind them under a false banner, chasing a stated dream of equality, when we all know it's just about money.

Should this bill pass, the only winners will be the developers, who I understand are backing this bill, Scott Rechler first among them. This bill will not desegregate Connecticut. These housing units will sell at high prices to more upper middle class white people. A paltry number of units are being set aside as low income housing, and often those requirements phase out in a very short span of time. If you do not see this for what it is - a move by developers to line their pockets - I'm not sure our current leaders are capable of leading us into anything other than disaster. I vote. I will not vote for anyone, or any party, that supports this bill. Westporters moved to Westport to live in a small town. Already, the town is bursting at its seams with several over crowded elementary schools and terrible transportation woes (have you driven on our streets recently? The trains in CT are a mess). What sound logic suggests taking low density neighborhoods and allowing developers to build whatever they want? How much has the recent building spree of high-density housing in our town moved the dial on racial diversity? None. Overdevelopment of the suburbs is NOT the answer to Connecticut's problems. Forcing apartment buildings on to small, quiet streets will do nothing but tear the fabric of this town apart. The only gain will be the financial one for developers. My vote and my tax dollars are contingent on maintaining a high quality of life. If you turn my street and my town into an overdeveloped, urban area with no infrastructure to support such a misbegotten venture, you will destroy Westport and surrounding towns. People pay absurd housing prices and taxes in return for high quality of life in towns like Westport in Connecticut: to live on quiet streets, to live in low-density neighborhoods, to have streets that can handle traffic and schools that can handle the numbers. If you tear that apart, by inserting high-density housing in the middle of our neighborhoods, I will leave. I will take my tax dollars and leave. You cannot fix Connecticut's problems by destroying what does work. Westport works. It works as a small town with primarily single family housing and appropriately placed multi-family housing. Development must be done in town, with debates held in town, decided by members of the town. Local government works. Hartford has no place to insert itself into these decisions. You don't live here. You have no skin in the game - unless developers are paying you to allow their rape of Connecticut.

Hands off our town.

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